

whose wit has expired only in the same moment with life, to fortify the pensive spirit for its last removal. "Is it not because" there is not a God in Israel, that ye have sent to inquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron?"\*

Another order of sentiments concerning death, of a character too bold to be called consolations, has been represented as animating one class of human beings. In remarking on Lucan, I noticed that desire of death which has appeared in the expressions of great minds, sometimes while merely indulging solemn reflections when no danger or calamity immediately threatened, but often in the conscious approach towards a fatal catastrophe. Many writers of later times have exerted their whole strength, and have even excelled themselves, in representing the high sentiments in which this desire has displayed itself; genius has found its very gold mine in this field. If this grandeur of sentiment had been in the genuine spirit to animate piety while it exalts the passions, some of the poets would have ranked among our greatest benefactors. Powerful genius, aiding to inspire a Christian triumph in the prospect of death, might be revered as a prophet, might be almost loved as a benignant angel. Few men's emotions can have approached nearer to enthusiasm than mine, in reading the sentiments made to be uttered by sages and reflective heroes in this prospect. I have felt these passages as the last and mightiest of the enchantments of poetry, of power to inspire for a little while a contempt of all ordinary interests, of the world which we inhabit, and of life itself. While the enthusiast is elated with such an emotion, nothing may appear so captivating as some noble occasion of dying; such an occasion as that when Socrates died for virtue; or that when Brutus at Philippi fell with falling liberty.<sup>f</sup> Poetry has delighted to display personages of this high order, in the same fatal predicament; and the situation of such men has appeared

\* 2 Kings i. 3.

<sup>t</sup> Poetry will not easily exceed many of the expressions which mere history has recorded. I should little admire the capability of feeling, or greatly admire the Christian temper, of the man who could without emotion read, for instance, the short observations of Brutus to his friend, (in contemplation even of a *self-inflicted* death,) on the eve of the battle which extinguished all hope of freedom; "We shall either be victorious, or pass away beyond the power of those that are so. "We shall deliver our country by victory, or ourselves by death."